

Doctrine of the Second Coming of Christ Is it Imminent or Impending?

1. The concept of Christ coming at any moment tends to heighten the level of expectation, which, in turn, leads to date setting, and false hopes.
2. There is much Scriptural evidence to support not an imminent return of Christ, but an impending return.
 - The Great Commission implies a long period of time. *Matthew 28:19 Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost: 20 Teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you: and, lo, I am with you always, even unto the end of the world. Amen.*
 - Paul expected to die prior to the return of Christ. *2 Timothy 4:6 For I am now ready to be offered, and the time of my departure is at hand. 7 I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith: 8 Henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous judge, shall give me at that day: and not to me only, but unto all them also that love his appearing.*
 - Jesus predicted that Peter would suffer the death of a martyr. *John 21:18 Verily, verily, I say unto thee, When thou wast young, thou girdedst thyself, and walkedst whither thou wouldest: but when thou shalt be old, thou shalt stretch forth thy hands, and another shall gird thee, and carry thee whither thou wouldest not. 19 This spake he, signifying by what death he should glorify God. And when he had spoken this, he saith unto him, Follow me.*
 - Judgment was to come upon Israel. In the Olivet Discourse, given in AD 30, the Lord anticipated the passing of time prior to the impending judgment. *Matthew 24:36 But of that day and hour knoweth no man, no, not the angels of heaven, but my Father only.*
 - The very sayings of Christ indicate a large interval of time. Jesus spoke of a man traveling into a far country. *Matthew 25:19 After a long time the lord of those servants cometh, and reckoneth with them.*
 - There must first come apostasy and the Man of Sin. *2 Thessalonians 2:1 Now we beseech you, brethren, by the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, and by our gathering together unto him, 2 That ye be not soon shaken in mind, or be troubled, neither by spirit, nor by word, nor by letter as from us, as that the day of Christ is at hand. 3 Let no man deceive you by any means: for that day shall not come, except there come a falling away first, and that man of sin be revealed, the son of perdition.*
 - There are many exhortations for the saints to watch and be ready.

1 Corinthians 1:7 So that ye come behind in no gift; waiting for the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ:

Colossians 3:4 When Christ, who is our life, shall appear, then shall ye also appear with him in glory.

1 Thessalonians 3:13 To the end he may stablish your hearts unblameable in holiness before God, even our Father, at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ with all his saints.

2 Thessalonians 1:7 And to you who are troubled rest with us, when the Lord Jesus shall be revealed from heaven with his mighty angels, 8 In flaming fire taking vengeance on them that know not God, and that obey not the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ: 9 Who shall be punished with everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord, and from the glory of his power; 10 When he shall come to be glorified in his saints, and to be admired in all them that believe (because our testimony among you was believed) in that day.

1 Peter 1:13 Wherefore gird up the loins of your mind, be sober, and hope to the end for the grace that is to be brought unto you at the revelation of Jesus Christ;

1 Peter 4:13 But rejoice, inasmuch as ye are partakers of Christ's sufferings; that, when his glory shall be revealed, ye may be glad also with exceeding joy.

1 John 2:28 And now, little children, abide in him; that, when he shall appear, we may have confidence, and not be ashamed before him at his coming.

Special Note.

These exhortations are for the Second Advent of Christ. Those who divide the Second Advent into two phases, or stages, do properly apply these passages to the second stage, which leads to a problem. If the Rapture takes place in Stage I, seven years prior to Stage II, why the need to watch? People will know exactly when the coming of the Lord will be.